

Message Text

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USIA-15 OMB-01 CIEP-03 EB-11 COME-00 TRSE-00 CU-05

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 479

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IZ, US

SUBJECT: U.S.-IRAQI RELATIONS

1. SCHIZOPHRENIC NATURE OF IRAQI APPROACH TOWARD U.S. IS MORE MARKED THAN EVER. ON ONE HAND AMERICAN BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVES, JOURNALISTS AND OTHER PRIVATE GROUPS CONTINUE TO RECEIVE RED CARPET TREATMENT. MOST STRIKING RECENT EXAMPLE WAS JULY 29-AUGUST 3 VISIT OF UNIVERSITY GROUP FROM RALEIGH-DURHAM AREA (STATE 152352). GOI PAID ALL EXPENSES OF 14 MEMBER GROUP INCLUDING PART OF INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL. UNIVERSITY AND OTHER OFFICIALS GAVE GROUP BRIEFINGS ON KURDISH PROBLEM AND IRAQ'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. GOI GRANTED AN ADDITIONAL 45,000 DOLS TO SHAW UNIVERSITY. (DESPITE SUCH HOSPITALITY, NONE OF IRAQI HOSTS FELT ABLE TO ATTEND SMALL RECEPTION I GAVE FOR GROUP.) OTHER RECENT EXAMPLES INCLUDE FIRST NATIONAL CITY BANK GROUP FOR WHOM NEW PRESIDENT OF RAFIDAIN BANK GAVE DINNER WHICH ALL LEADING BANKERS ATTENDED. ALMOST EQUALLY WARM RECEPTION GIVEN THIS WEEK TO LUMMUS REP WHOSE COMPANY BEING URGED TO BID ON 200 MILLION DOLLAR PETROCHEMICAL COMPLEX; BENDIX CORP. REPS WHO REQUESTED TO COME AND BID ON 8 MILLION DOLLAR TURN-KEY SPARK PLUG FACTORY; AND REP OF VOSBECK, VOSBECK, KENDRICK AND REDINGER, WHO

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URGED TO SUBMIT BID FOR LONG TERM CONSULTING CONTRACT.

2. ON DARK SIDE IS CONTINUATION OF ANTI-AMERICAN PROPAGANDA, PROHIBITION ON U.S. FIRMS PARTICIPATING IN TRADE FAIR, ABSENCE OF ANY PUBLICITY ON ABOVE MENTIONED ACTIVITIES (WHEN CONTRACTS CONCLUDED WITH U.S. FIRMS, THEY REFERRED TO MEDIA ONLY AS "FOREIGN FIRMS"); AND CONTINUAL HARASSMENT OF USINT LOCAL EMPLOYEES BY SECRET POLICE. IN ADDITION, ALTHOUGH WE NOW HAVE GOOD ACCESS TO MOST STATE ORGANIZATIONS ON COMMERCIAL MATTERS, DIRECT CONTACTS WITH MINISTRIES ON OTHER MATTERS REMAIN VERY CIRCUMSPECT. MY ATTEMPTS TO EXPAND IRAQI GOVERNMENT CONTACTS BY REQUESTING TO CALL ON MINISTRY OF PLANNING OFFICIAL AND TARIQ AZIZ, EDITOR OF ATH-THAWRA (TO GIVE COPY OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON INTERVIEW) HAVE SO FAR ELICITED NO RESPONSE.

3. COMMENT: GAP BETWEEN GOI POLICY OF EXPANDED COMMERCIAL RELATIONS AND PRIVATE CONTACTS WITH U.S. AND RIGID BAATH IDEOLOGICAL VIEW OF U.S. HAS WIDENED CONSIDERABLY DURING PAST FEW MONTHS. IN CIRCUMSTANCES, I BELIEVE WE SHOULD CONTINUE TO STRONGLY URGE PRIVATE AMERICAN BUSINESSMENT AND OTHER GROUPS TO ESTABLISH AND EXPAND LINKS WITH IRAQ, WHILE WE, AS USG, IGNORE AFFRONTS AND PROPAGANDA ATTACKS THAT GOI STILL FINDS NECESSARY TO PRESENT AS ITS OFFICIAL POSTURE. LOWRIE

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